

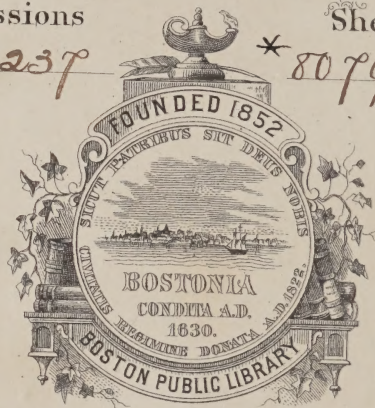
BOSTON
RESERVE
CLOSET

Accessions

215.237


Shelf No.

* 8079.44



Received May 1, 1877





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Boston Public Library



BOSTON MUSEUM
OF THE
FINE ARTS.

— ♦ —
A COMPANION TO THE CATALOGUE.

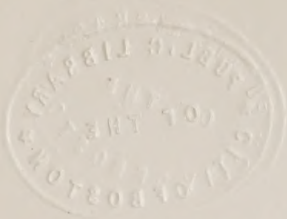
BOSTON MUSEUM OF THE FINE ARTS.

A Companion to the Catalogue.



BOSTON :
ROBERTS BROTHERS.

1877.



©

215,237

May 1, 1877.

Cambridge:
Press of John Wilson and Son.

DEDICATED

TO THE

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

KEATS.

BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS.

ONE fine day, I proposed to visit our new Museum of the Fine Arts, and on my way encountered my friend STARBUCK. Starbuck is a fine fellow, one of the suburban country gentlemen who live with dignity, if not much profit, on a handsome farm not many miles from Boston. He belongs to a class I very much respect: like Antæus, he seems to gain a wholesome strength from the mere touch of Mother Earth; and I suppose it is providentially arranged that the sweetness and dignity of the life of these farmers should not be compromised by fluctuations in the lottery of profit such as only befits the city.

The class with us is increasing; and, though for this rural life our climate has discouragements which the more even one of our forefathers does not know, I hope public opinion will fortify their modest ambition by an approbation they cannot neglect.

Winter and midsummer must be their times of trial; but new appliances of comfort, a better so-

ciety around them, and a fuller knowledge of how to meet these rigors by culture and home resources, will finally help them to triumph over their adversary.

Starbuck had been to Europe; but was more concerned to visit Messrs. Cutbush and Waterer, gardeners to the Queen, than to possess himself of aesthetic knowledge. The galleries he visited held objects of lovely form and splendid color, but they were from a hand to which Raphael's was as that of a savage. The long, tropical, and richly tinted greenhouses of the above-named gentlemen were no poor preparation for one who through them was taught to love beauty in every form; and familiarity with their unspeakable masterpieces, in whose creation the heavenly Artist deigns to permit his creatures to share, gave him a stand-point high enough to look, if it must be, a little down on man's best achievements. And Starbuck had that directness and honesty which breathes from the soil; there were no traps for artifice in his surrounding. He was genuine to the core; and, standing as he did so four-square on Mother Earth, he could afford to admit that he did not know every thing. He was strong enough to believe in guidance; for, as he said, "only fools and madmen try to escape it."

I asked him why he had come to town; and he said, "To admire the new Museum," and added, "Take me there, and tell me the things about it it is fit that a plain man should know."

I gladly assented, pleased to know I had not a pseudo-critic behind the modest appeal, and determined to talk to him about it in a way which should not crush him with too much formidable learning. There is a way of talking of the Fine Arts which takes the life out of them. All these beautiful things were done simply and naturally, — at the appointed epoch, indeed, each bloomed like a flower; but there is a learning which weighs them down, injures their stems, and effaces the freshness of their color. For they survive, not because they belong to the musty time of eld, such as it seems to us to be, so far from the life of to-day, but because they were the very freshest and brightest things of the hour which then was.

So I said, turning to him with a smile, "Take this new catalogue, and with it countercheck your crude impressions, and my loose talk; and we will try, if so it be possible, to rub the rust off these old things, and make them shine a little as they did when created."

"Mr. Starbuck," I continued, "you must know we are really proud of our modest yet brilliant beginning. The seed is a good one, sky and earth favorable, and we trust that the future holds no treachery to disappoint our hopes and mortify its planters. Here we are, fairly before it. You see what a cheerful, even joyous bit of architecture it is, but with a truncated look, which means this: we have anticipated the ardor of our successors,

and provided for it an outlet. This front, one half of its façade, is an eighth of the contemplated building when whole. Notice how rich-looking it is, incrusting with squares of harmonious color, and large and well-executed *relievi* of figures suitable to such a building. These are from England, and are in terra-cotta, very permanent, very effective, and not dear. They serve as a link with the great Museum of Kensington, to which they are related. You will guess at once that it is not a church or a court-room, and already might suppose it a building for Fine Art.

See those unfinished, headless, granite columns before you. Granite is now polished by modern methods which make it far less costly than when were made those huge sarcophagi at Rome, in which you may yet see your face. The capitals are to be in terra-cotta, like the ornaments of the exterior. It will carry to the interior the method we have known on the outside. But whether the marriage between clay and granite is not a risk in taste will be for our visitors to decide.

Ascend these steps, and enter. You are in the hall, and see before you a staircase which mounts to the second story. It is ample and airy, and the abundant light you notice here you will find undiminished through all the rooms. This is much owing to the felicity of the site; for the Museum owns the little plot of ground on which it stands, and no overshadowing wall can ever take away

that first necessity for a treasure-house for the eyes, — light enough to see. We will look a little about us, and then go leisurely through the halls in succession, taking this food for the mind deliberately, and so avoiding indigestion. For one can bolt a gallery, as our people often do a dinner, and with an equally fatal result. No time being given for assimilation, the crowded brain retires, not only unrefreshed by beauty, but oppressed and overloaded with the undigested mass.

See first this figure with the lyre, stretching forward, shading his eyes with his hand. It is by Thomas G. Crawford, an American. This work was the turning-point of his life. For though Vellati, an Italian neighbor of his in the Via Marguta, at Rome, saw and loudly proclaimed his genius, America did not know it. But Mr. Charles Sumner, with that tireless enthusiasm of his which was kindled in so many directions, saw this statue, believed in Crawford, made his townsmen purchase it, and thus did then and there for Crawford what in the same city, years before, Mr. Hope had done for Thorwaldsen at the turning-point of his life. It reminds you of the Apollo, so slim and pared away are the graceful limbs; but it has an action of its own. It is Greek, but filtered through a Yankee mind, and with somewhat of the energy of the New World. Our custom-house, the deadly foe to all art, was so careless at its coming here, that, rolled over and over in

its case like a bale of cotton, it was broken into many pieces before it was seen by any one, and thus in appearance became an antique ere its time.

Pass on. Here is the "Young Columbus." This is a very clever specimen of the new school of Italy. This school was made by the success of a statue of the dying Napoleon, — a statue none could resist. It penetrated you with an infinite pathos: there was the look of an overthrown world in the sad eyes of the dying Emperor, while yet you were made to notice how true were the folds of the map on his poor knees, and how elaborate the fringe of the cushion on which he sat. If Italy afterwards could not continue such grandeur of expression, she could at least rival the cushion. We saw how well she has done so at the Philadelphia Exhibition. There room after room showed the triumph of the Italian chisel over the sobriety of marble; and little shirts, flowers, and all accessories to childish forms, had in treatment the sweet triviality of *pastel*. Do you here see any thing in that boyish face of thought big with the birth of a world? Are you not rather invited to admire his jaunty legs, his crisp doublet, and even the impossible polish of the huge ring below him, superior to all stormy sea-action?

See now the playful whim of Miss Harriet Hosmer, called "Will-o-the-wisp." Miss Hosmer is one of us, and has earned an honorable fame at Rome for other things as well as sculpture. Brave,

self-reliant, self-respecting, she made her way where many would have failed. Her father, that good and clever physician, long ago invited Horatio Greenough and myself to visit Watertown and judge her work. Nothing could exceed Mr. Greenough's astonishment when he found the brave little lady in a pavilion of her own, which she had hung with sentences encouraging to industry and confidence, mallet in hand before a half-finished bust, and facing him with those same clear eyes which have won for her so many friends. Her father's face was all anxiety: what bird his fledgling might prove he did not know, and scarcely dared to think that her eccentricity might be genius. As we stepped into our carriage to return, with a face of paternal dismay touching to behold, he said to Mr. Greenough, — "And what do you think she will do?" to which in his cheery chest-tones the sculptor cried, "What won't she do!" and, as we drove off, we saw a smile of happy hope displacing the paternal look of anxiety. How his directness and hers went straight to the simple, ingenuous heart of Gibson, the world knows, as it does how she has done justice to his instruction and confidence. She has held her own; and America loves her as one of its pioneer women, who, instead of talking on platforms of what women have the right to do, simply went and did it. She has in her look a certain resemblance to Rosa Bonheur, and they are women of the same stamp.

Now just notice, as we move, these fragments of hands and heads, inscriptions, and such like, which crowd the wall of this recess. The effect of richness, like an antique plum-cake, is gained by thus inserting them in the wall. They could not otherwise be seen at all; and, imperfect as they are, they suggest much. In that future happy hour when enjoyment of our Museum will have decided you to visit Rome, you will see such an incrustation as this as you mount to examine, the tantalizing recovery of old Etruscan gold-working, in the rooms of Signor Castellani.

Over the way, see this tapestry from the Gobelin manufactory. Such things as this are only done where kings are. There is the pride of difficulty as well as the content of accomplishment in these splendid royal achievements. Like the government mosaic works at Rome, they simulate paintings, which they are not. The Roman pictures are made with little squares of a vitreous mosaic. St. Peter's is full of these, which look at a certain distance just like the old masters they copy. Both are pretty, both are difficult and a surprise; but, except as an expression of royal luxury, we might say, *Cui bono?* if we dared to ask such a question of what is so lovely and so valued by the world.

The ancients worked much in mosaic; and the famous cup with the doves upon its rim, now to be seen, I believe is described by Pliny as copied

from a picture. But generally they used it in the best way as a flooring. Where the climate is warm and carpets are an offence, such cool and beautiful substitutes for them are a genuine success. It is somewhat odd that with all the perversity of fashion the moderns have so little imitated it.

In Paris, a visit to the Gobelins is, or used to be, *de rigueur*. There we saw the artist pursuing his work without seeing it, with the subject set beside him for a guide. Such difficult industry served to point a moral for the poet, as he said :—

“So we weave our life, unable to see till the end if it be a masterpiece or a failure.”

Pause now, and look upstairs to the first landing. See how well, in the shadows below the window, sleeps gracefully, with one languid arm above her head, some woman, the dream of a Greek artist of old. She was called once Cleopatra, and was supposed to be dying from the bite of the asp we see upon her arm. But people do not die with such a negligent grace, and bracelets made of a coiled serpent are found abundantly, and critics will blunder if they can. But is she any more Ariadne than Cleopatra? Somehow she has not the look of it. Yet how beautiful she is, the drapery especially, winding so carelessly around limbs which befit a goddess!

And now we will make the circuit of the rooms below. Let us try first

The Egyptian Room.

I see your look of discouragement. To you there is something uncanny in these strange forms, these nightmare, hybrid creatures, half man, half beast; and these funny little figures sitting on their heels or grimly upright, their hands clenched at their side, with here and there a bird, a snake, an eye, and crooks and twists of color which run up and down beside them, like a line of figures of which no Sphinx could give the sum total; and these clumsy boxes of shittim-wood, which hold by a stupendous infelicity the one part of man it was not intended to preserve, defrauding the grave of its prey, and so deftly done that this blunder of mistaking the casket for its contents can never be got rid of, and so we must stumble over it for ever. These cheap, blue necklaces and coarse scarabæi, — where a poor insect is travestied into a god, — are they not too childish? You say to yourself, "We may indeed keep, somewhere in the attic, the mis-carven cradle of the race; but why parade it as something we should think beautiful, and revere?" Ah! my friend, if you should get to know that Egypt whence these things come, or dream in this little treasure-house of their secrets, till something within you whispers away half the enigma, you would not think or say so any longer.

When Egypt is mentioned, we think at once of

the Sphinx. This popular notion is not without its truth. There is something there which we cannot solve. We feel we come near it, but we are not quite sure. The statement of the secret is made with such frankness, and so fully, that it seems always on the point of disclosing itself. The temples are everywhere, all open to the day; and every figure, whether of man, bird, or beast, is so exactly stated, with so sharp and uncompromising an outline, that it looks as if we must understand it all. And yet there are mysteries in the soul of man, mysteries of belief and faith, that even that soul cannot wholly state. Man has a dreamy longing, a poetic aspiration, till he thinks, through habit, it is fixed conviction. But, when he endeavors to tell to another what he believes, the hearer finds it not at all so clear. The high things of the mind, its loftiest speculation, can have no background of proof. They can only appeal to us through the elevation they induce, and a sympathy with something which lifts us beyond ourselves. And so it may be Egypt can never say its final word.

We may never exactly know whether it was their belief that God can only be known through the creatures he has made, and that life should be worshipped as bringing us nearer to him, or whether their creed was a Pantheism which identified the world with God, or a mere grovelling and vulgar fetichism which adores it knows not

what in a cat or a monkey. But it seems safest to say that when all the works of man, as in Egypt, appeal to us through a grandeur and sublimity of their own, that we are right in giving that interpretation to their religious creed which is most in accordance with what these make us feel.

Although the secret of secrets may never be told, one great secret has already been wrested from Egypt: these columns of hieroglyphics, these snakes and corkscrews and vultures, have told their story. Each of these figures was once supposed to have a mystical completeness in itself. But what was its meaning none could guess, till Champollion came. He it was who, by one flash of the mind, lighted up this great city of the dead; and since that light has pierced the blackest mummy-pit, no burial-place, no temple, has kept its secret. Yet, like all discoveries, there is a simplicity about it which makes the race ashamed of its long failure. As the boy says of the juggler's trick, "Is it only that?" so the world is somewhat reluctant to be on such easy terms with these mysterious scrolls and temple-walls.

Noticing in inscriptions the place where the name of a known king should be, — namely, in the scarabæus-shaped oval called his cartouche, — and that the letters, if letters they were, corresponded with those of his name, and comparing these, one by one, with the letters of other cartouches, Champollion, when he found the same figure, inferred

a letter common to both, and thus little by little secured a complete alphabet. The first letters he got were obtained from the cartouche of Cleopatra, or, as written on the monuments, Klau-patra.

The discovery of the Rosetta stone with a trilingual inscription, now in the British Museum, played a great part in helping out his theory. M. Mariette Bey has also discovered a tablet of the same character. With the aid of the first of these, and that of hourly experience, the hypothesis of Champollion became certainty; and when, having so read off a temple-wall, or a papyrus roll, he had got all the words of all his letters, a second happy flash of intelligence made him see that these words were modern Coptic. The Copts are held, by common consent, to be the descendants of the old Egyptians. Christianity was by law enforced in Egypt under Constantine; and these Copts became Christians, and are so to this day. A sullen, dreary sort of Christians they are. In their sombre faces, we seem to read a regret for their old religion. One might think that, if any in Egypt could have remembered the high secrets of old time, the Copts were the men to do it. But they do not, but instead present us with the solution of Egypt's enigma, the hieroglyphic, by reading it off into their language of to-day.

It is not very difficult to read hieroglyphics now, and many travellers to Egypt do something of this; and yet one can find even there a disbelief in

Champollion, and a notion that it is either delusion or imposture which none seems clever enough to expose.

See these broken fragments of syenite. This reddish granite is procured only at Assouan, the ancient Syene, where the quarries show tool-marks and the method of splitting the stone. The splitting was done by drilling holes an inch or two long, square and close together. Wooden wedges were inserted, and water poured on. This expands the wood and splits the stone. Once we might have thought this strange; but the way fire and water split and crumbled our own huge granite cornices and pillars, in the late fire, makes it now easy to understand. These granite sculptures have sometimes the head of an animal or a bird. Notice what a severe and majestic aspect they have. Mariette Bey remarks, in his modest, instructive little itinerary of the Nile, upon the strange power the Egyptian sculpture had in authorizing a belief in such monsters impossible in life and which their religion figured to be gods. Whatever may be the combination, it has an air of veracity, and always escapes exaggeration. When the French Granville illustrated "La Fontaine," his combinations of man and beast had the delightful *esprit* of his nation, and were the best of caricatures. But the Egyptian artist melted life into impossible compounds, yet always retained the grandeur he desired.

The longing for immortality we possess might

be thought the result of a long descended hope, each brain repeating its predecessor. But here, so early in the world, the Egyptians appear to have had a conviction of a future life, even stronger than ours. It does not seem fairly to belong to the world's morning; and yet it must have been a part only of their profound insight into the moral and physical world which leaves its expression on every monument, and made them, in religion and philosophy, the fathers of modern thought.

See these cases of *intagli*, necklaces, and little figures in bronze or shining blue. This blue is made from the oxidation of copper: it suits Egypt, for it is still its favorite color. Some of these little figures have a blue strangely soft and beautiful. It is like the turquoise, and that you see at this day on every hand in Egypt. Where the flesh has so warm a color, and garments are rich with reds and yellows, a point of blue is a drop of coolness, a piquancy which explains the taste that so values this gem. And, if the modern Egyptian loves the turquoise, we may be pretty sure the ancients did. As their sacred river inevitably runs in but one channel, so the modern life flows in its ancient bed without a circuit. Men were fitted into their life by its conditions; and things repeat themselves there, as the mould of the artist repeats with endless recurrence the same form. To show you how things continue, I made a drawing, while in Egypt, of a female Nubian from the life. Her arms were

covered with bangles and bracelets of the antiques pattern. A square, silver plate was on her brow at the dividing of her hair; and the hair flowed in little braids beyond the ears, and there each was tipped with a shining point. I have a *squccze* from the portrait of Cleopatra, at Karnak. The same braids, though larger, are here sculptured; and I have from the tombs beyond Medinet Haboo, in a roll of mummy-cloth, long tresses braided in identically the same fashion.

Most of the stone fragments here are a gift from the family of Lowell, obtained more than forty years ago, during his Eastern travel, by Mr. John Lowell, whose foundation for his noble course of lectures, I believe, was dated from Thebes. By accident, I met Mr. Lowell at Naples, ready to embark on his Eastern tour. I had just missed at Malta an Eastern steamer, through the negligence of a friend, who promised to wake me, if it came at night; for its delay was short. In the morning, I found the steamer gone; and Mr. Lowell most generously invited me to share his tour in compensation. He meant to do it magnificently, with every Eastern appliance; for he even took with him a clever French artist, whose sketches some of us have seen. But I had just paid my passage through to Marseilles, and did not like to lose my money. Having been since to the East, I feel what a mistake I made then. The proposition took me too much by surprise, for I had for it but a moment to decide.

One of the most characteristic things in this room is there over the door, — a cast from one of the spoliations, and they were not few, of Lepsius. It is interesting; for it pictures for us the taking of a town in Palestine by Seti I., the father of the great Rameses. It is something to see any representation of the people the Jews were to conquer and enslave in their turn. The expression of ardor in the victors and confusion in the vanquished is thoroughly good; but there is a childishness in the figures and their action, and in the enlargement of Seti above all others, which shows that where the old chisel left the groove appointed for it by the priest, it could blunder like that of other nations.

We see in Egypt, on the sculptures, very little of the horse. Art could not catch his grace and beauty for a long while. In Egypt, he is too slender and gallops impossibly; in Assyria, too heavy and with false insertion of muscles. It was the Greeks who first gave to us true representations of the horse, and they idealized his proportions as they did those of man. They caught the essential contour, the blocks of bone and muscle, and, as they did in man, omitted unimportant details. It is especially in the head of the horse that they triumph. We understand the living one better for having seen it: it might seem the divine model after which the living horse was formed. And who but the Greeks understood a procession?

Egypt isolates, for the most part, its figures, or falls into confusion ; but Greece gives us the movement of its line of maidens coming to sacrifice ; and in the Panathenaic procession, which we shall soon see, we think to hear the tramp of a hundred hoofs, as the youthful riders curve and swing with their horses' action, as if all were only ennobled life.

As there are many objects here of interest I do not touch upon, I suspect you would do better to come again some time with your Catalogue, and hunt them up by yourself. We will now pass into the

First Greek Room.

The casts in this room are chiefly from Grecian sculptures the most archaic — that is, oldest — that we possess. The earliest are the famous lions of Mycenæ ; formless rather, and heraldic, and indicating by their treatment that they are there for something else than their own sake. They are contemporaneous with the siege of Troy. Since then, they have been staring out into an unobservant world which was heedless of the treasures they guarded, though the treasure has always been said to be there, as well as the graves of the Grecian heroes. These lions are now the greatest point of interest to the modern world of artists and scholars. Their spell has at last been broken, and they have given up their trust. It reads like a tale of the Arabian Nights : how they kept

for so long their secret, until the clever hero, who always comes at last, managed to get by them and finish the story. Nor seems it less than an Arabian tale, — those impossible recoveries of swords and shields and crowns and chains of gold, which the world had supposed to exist only in the Ophir of the poet's brain. Fortunately no familiarity can stale the immortal charm of Homer: it can only enhance it. And how sublime a thing it is to think that a man's thought, a poet's verse, can give, even after so many years, to those hilts of gold, those rivulets of shining chain-work, a value to which the noble metal is as dross! The world has felt a shock of pleasure almost too keen after its long infidelity of faith. Germany had taught us to resolve every historic truth into the unsubstantial cloud of myth, and now our cure comes from the country which wounded us; and with it a recovery of the mind's sanity, a heartier and healthier trust in what the Past has told us.

Facing these lions, see these two temple fronts from *Ægina*, of the oldest Greek sculpture. See the simplicity of the proportions, the naturalness of the action, and the unbarbaric moderation of statement. And see the happy smile on each face which war cannot disturb. Was it that war was their highest pleasure, or was it that life was so lovely, death could not spoil it of its happy look? See this one dying in the corner without distortion, and once more with that smile which is a part of

the early history of the world, and which we have just left behind us in Egypt. Later will come for the dying warrior a complexity of expression, and the poet's expression of it :

“*Dulcis et moriens reminiscitur Argos.*”

Notice the formality in the lines of the scanty dress. It is here at its completest in this exquisite Minerva, which seems to me the truer patron of Athens than the far freer and more graceful figure of the goddess in Athens' maturer day. This is the first and genuine type whence all the others flowed.

See these vases and pottery of Cyprus General di Cesnola has recovered for us. He and Dr. Schliemann are the pioneers of the new methods of discovery. They do not wait till an antique thrusts itself up somewhere before their eyes ; but they go down to the floors of the city and its temples, to find what will not be revealed otherwise. The stones in the wall of Jerusalem are sixty feet below the wailing-place of the modern Jews. Dr. Cesnola had to go only half as far. At Ilium, where city was superposed upon city, I suppose Dr. Schliemann had to dig for nearly that distance ; but they have both shown us how it is to be done. Everywhere in the ancient world is a find waiting for us, — everywhere have statues of the gods, inscribed tablets, broken altars, been potted down for posterity.

As Cyprus was a general sea-port, taken and retaken by Phœnician, Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman conquest, traces of all these nations are found there. It was not to be expected that specimens of the noblest works of art should be so hidden; but our collection, supplementing the far larger one of New York, connects so many epochs, so many schools of art, that both have a value and importance of their own. No wonder that Mr. Gladstone, who reads Homer of a morning, while others read the "Times," should have long lingered before this collection, when it was in London, nor that he should have desired to retain it there.

See, too, here again is that same happy look of Greece and Egypt, but mis-sculptured into a smirk. In the New York collection, a long line of heads, with this archaic smile, startles you as you glance down their profiles; for they seem to have just overheard some joke you have made.

How pleasant it is, with what seems to us our little knowledge, to be able to read off so easily these old things. Phœnicia, Assyria, Egypt, each makes its mark on every object of theirs; and that burly Roman head in their midst, — could you mistake it for any thing else? How it lords it over the others, and brutalizes by its gaze the delicate beauty about it!

But turn to see this glass. See what mother-of-pearl, what iridescence, the sunless depths of earth can hold; and do not despair of trusting to

it more precious things, after seeing such a resurrection. It is the euthanasia of a dish or goblet to find Death so turning it to jewelry. This beauty is owing to the chemical action of certain elements in the earth upon the tissue of the glass. The lustre betrays the site and the age of the glass; and a new class of experts is springing up, who recognize and assign the true date and place of such goblets, it is said, with exactness.

Our worthy fellow-citizen, Di Cesnola, is running a race with his German rival. The first find of each has led to a second one, richer and more abundant than the first; and while this Museum, except through casts, can never hope to behold the golden face of Agamemnon and his peers, New York fortunately has secured the rich second harvest of Di Cesnola as well as his first.

You must not fail to notice here the Chiusi pottery, presented by Mr. Dixwell; for it is from such beginnings as this that lovelier things have come. It is tentative, rude, grim; but it was from Greece, or colonists of Greece, trying their hand in a direction where their genius invited. It is just such seed-vessels, links between the full future and the slender beginning, which are now so justly prized. The word *Etruscan* is chased from all the vases of Magna Græcia: it retreats to its hiding-place, and we do not yet know where that is. Signor Castellani, we believe, holds that the Etruscans were autochthones, aboriginal to Italy; but I lately

read a fascinating book trying to prove that the Etruscan language, so defiant of explanation, found one in the fact of its identity with that of the Finnish or Northern Asiatic emigration. There is a legend that the Etruscans came from the North, like so many other invading tribes. Not much is known of them. They did not worship in temples, but among their tombs. They were the first we know who pictured angels, winged and fair, or dark and malignant, according as they were good or evil, and presiding over the life and death of man. Their women share the banquet with the men. Their features express a certain modern refinement which we enjoy. Can all this have come from the North?

Of the little set of Etruscan vases given by myself to the Museum, I would say only this: finding that Signor Alessandro Castellani, at Naples, was making a small but historic collection of vases, beginning with the pre-historic lacustrine and ending with the debased, over-ornamented ware nearly as late as the beginning of our era, I desired him to add to it, for me, any specimens he might have to make the series complete. Its merit is its comprehensiveness. The extreme beauty of a few of the specimens, representing the best period of Greek art, stands central between its formless birth and florid decadence. The lady with her toilette-box and her maid is like a line of Homer or a drawing by Flaxman. Flaxman was a Sweden-

borgian, and either he saw the olden Greece through visions, or his clay was compounded of Grecian earth. Now let us enter the

Second Greek Room.

This holds specimens of more mature Greek work than the last, and, indeed, of its prime, serving as a beacon-light to perfection of sculpture for all who came after.

All schools of art are short lived. As well expect the arrow, the rocket, to fix themselves at the glorious height they have reached, as for any thing done by man to keep long at its loftiest elevation. Each country has had its Augustan, Elizabethan age, when the freshness of youth was retained without as yet marks of decrepitude. The sculpture of Greece had for its golden period the epoch of Phidias. The Parthenon, the masterpiece of that era, is always ascribed to him; but he was not only a man, but a school, as indeed is generally the case where a master leads his epoch. Many worked with him whose names are known, and emulous not only of each other, but of him. It was every thing to this school that a quarry of marble so softly brilliant as that of Pentelicus lay conveniently near to Athens. Till then, no country had had such an opportunity to display the genius of its children.

The numbers in the Catalogue, 1, 2, 3, and 4,

are casts from portions of the Parthenon. We do not know that even these were all by the same hand, as the genius of Phidias breathes through his school such a unity as makes discrimination difficult. The principle of this sculpture is an ideal rendering of the human form, which consists in seizing upon the element of beauty in each part, and expressing it simply and without exaggeration, while details are omitted. Grace or grandeur breathes through these figures, as the subject is simpler or more elevated; but there is little desire for intellectual expression or any marked rendering of individual character. For in Greece it was the whole man that was seen, and not his face only. Beauty of form was more attained there than elsewhere, through the health which a training in the gymnasium and the arena induced. The physical happiness of man must have been in proportion to his physical perfection. All felt the sweet influence of a healthy, youthful body, and the beauty which clothed such healthy life. Socrates himself, whose gifts lay in another direction, speaks with enthusiasm of the beauty of a certain Athenian youth, regarding him almost as a work of art. The transition from the bodily beauty all admired to its image in marble must have been easy for a people so educated. There was no need there of the critic or *virtuoso* to explain a loveliness which did not hide itself. Thus the charm of the best Greek art is double. It lies in the skill with which the

artist renders faultless form, and in the suggestion of happy, healthy human life behind the art. If once again our race could attain to such simplicity of living as had the Greeks, in a climate where drapery would not hide the body's perfection, we might hope to see again such a school of sculpture as theirs. To this perhaps we should add that serenity which comes from natures faulty, but not made morbid through consciousness of sin. One might suppose that sin, as we understand it, had never visited that Greek world. There god and goddess, man and woman, seem to breathe the same air of innocence.

Thus these beautiful things can never lose their high place. We go to them to see what man may attain to; and their freshness and tranquil joy wash from us the weariness of our artificial life.

Notice number 7, — the "Jupiter." How little in this benignant, youthfully venerable face would Judea recognize the ruler of the world. Morally, Zeus is as human as any of his subjects: he relies for reverence chiefly upon his acknowledged authority. When he

"Shakes his ambrosial curls and gives the nod,"

Greece must have thought rather of the beauty of those Olympian locks than of any terrors in that brow. It is human, fatherly, almost Anacreontic, and yet fit for the ruler of the sportive Greek group of gods and goddesses.

To see how unaffectedly the Greeks relied upon youthful beauty, look at the comely Ludovisi Mars. Ares, as the Greeks called him, here shows no terrors of battle, but is simply a tranquil youth.

You will find in the bas-reliefs from the temple of the "Wingless Victory," at Athens, the same grace and charm as in the figures of the Parthenon. The drapery clings to the limbs, so that some have thought the sculptor wetted his cloth to make it cling thus. But probably the stuffs were of light and delicate material, such as we still find in the East; perhaps of linen, so that the folds are broken and varied as you see. Mr. Stillman has ventured to conjecture that the statue in the centre of this little temple of Victory, a sort of Palladium for Athens, the "Wingless Victory" which should never leave it when after Marathon Persia was abased, may have been number 30, the "Venus of Milo." He supposes her to be writing the names of the victors of Marathon upon a tablet or shield which her knee supports. His reasons are that this statue was discovered sawed in two as if for sudden transport, and hidden for shelter in the wall, where a peasant found it. He asserts that there never was a temple to Venus in the Island of Milo. I think he says that he heard from the family of the peasant who found it that the arms were not then wanting. When found, it was put on board a Turkish ship; but a firman from the Sultan to the French enabled them to transfer it to the frigate which they

sent. Can the arms have been left in the Turkish ship ?

If there be one thing more than another which strikes us in the Greek statues of Venus, it is their resemblance. They all have the same attitude, though with different degrees of grace. The little, world-renowned Venus of the Florentine Tribune is the most lovely and *mignonne* of all, though the others resemble her. This one of Milo, the world-beloved expression of female dignity and grace, looks unlike any of these other Venuses. And yet the last, if not the best, criticism will have it that she is one of a group of Mars and Venus. For this the strongest plea is that it resembles a Greek coin of the two, where Venus has the same attitude as here. There are many other beautiful statues which I leave till your next visit. But look now at "Niobe and her Children," which, however, you can only see in their completeness at Florence, where they fill a room. There, pierced by the shafts of Apollo, lie about her her dying children; while one, the youngest girl, flies to the maternal arms for succor. The mother, helpless before the vengeance of a god, can only lift to heaven a face of hopeless anguish, — that face which Guido seems to have so much loved and reproduced, — while with lifted arm she gathers her drapery, as a shield and veil for a grief too insupportable for sight.

Glance at the famous "Apollo Belvedere." This is supposed to be a copy of an earlier work, some

have thought of bronze, on account of the treatment of the drapery which falls from the arm that bears the bow. I could suppose it a work of Greece's later day, so far is its effeminate grace distant from the simplicity of the school of Phidias. It is artificial and self-conscious, and its refinement is not genuine. It might be the brother of that other famous statue, the "Laocoön," where dexterity is carried to its utmost, and of which the tragedy, though sought for, fails of its expression. The convulsion of the aged priest, and the dwarfish grace of the two sons, are too sensational for nature; and yet it is perhaps the triumph of that elaboration Phidias disdained, but which has been the delight of earth's later days.

And now, before you leave this room, turn to carry away with you something of the freshness and grandeur of the best Greek work. Look at the "Theseus." It is, oh, how sadly broken and mutilated; but never was the dignity of a human form so well expressed. Shattered as it is, the serenity, the simplicity, the tranquil joy which the Greek chisel then lived to express, are not lost to us. Now we are in the

Third Greek Room.

Without wearying you by a careful examination of all here, glance about, so that you may receive the true expression of a few representative statues.

Here is that continuation of the best Greek day, in the "Discobolus." Can strength and youth be stated more simply? See how too much emphasis of the muscles is avoided. Agility and strength the sculptor desired for his statue; and see how nobly he makes us feel them by withholding overstatement. How unconscious is the youth! How much more the artist seems to have thought of his work than of himself! A child could admire this, and the cleverest man cannot get beyond it; for simplicity is the sister of beauty, while pretension is the sister of artifice.

And now, perhaps, my friend, you have found out that you yourself can be trusted to be your own guide.

The work whose appeal goes straightest to you, and which you are made to feel at first sight, you will find the best. And the more the work needs explanation or reference to the world's moods of fashion, the more certain you may be that it is inferior. It is the commentator who explains the Shakespeare we have already enjoyed, the critic who tries to give us reasons for our belief, who chill our faith, and get farthest from the genius of which they talk.

Notice the method of portrait-sculpture by the Greeks; as, for instance, this "Demosthenes," this "Menander." How unaffected are they both! How unconscious they seem, and how personal and characteristic is the action of each! You see

that the portraiture is thorough, and extends to the very feet, perhaps, also, to the manner of sitting or standing, and the beautiful avoidance of mock heroism in the pose. How much in all these particulars we moderns have to learn from them I need not tell you.

This dignified "Sophocles" was recovered in our day, and the story is interesting. Near Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, peasants working in the summer sun, thirsty for water, noticed a well whose lid their strength was unable to remove. Perhaps they felt that such a weight demanded an explanation, and so they would have it taken away. When they did so, after infinite toil, they found this statue, its head downwards, the base on which it stands having served as the cover of the well. No place could have better preserved it. You see it is wholly undefaced. It was soon after borne in triumph to the Vatican, where among its silent and haughty fellows it looks down, no doubt with something of disdain, upon our modern portrait statues.

Number 14, a boy taking a thorn from his foot, we thought beautiful, so naïve is its attitude, till we saw, at least some of us, the mutilated repetition of the same subject in the Centennial collection of Signor Castellani. There the action of the hand, the eagerness of the face, the droop of the back, the rendering of the hair, we found so superior to this as to show how much we may have lost in the copies of other ancient masterpieces which we have to admire for lack of the originals.

Go back for a moment, before we leave this room, to see the last work of art there named in the catalogue, — the "Dying Gladiator of Gaul." The beauty of this statue consists in its appeal to sentiment. Its pathos is manly, and unlike Laocoön, unaffected. Its companion, the "Fighting Gladiator," has every muscle braced with full tension. No model could keep long his muscles so strained. But the genius of the artist makes it live. It is the finest expression of action the ancients give us. But in this the muscles are relaxed in death. What a sad familiarity with human suffering and human brutality both these statues imply. The original has a look of dust and heat you miss here, for the polish makes it shine as with perspiration, while upon its surface time has imitated the stains of the arena. Notice the great circular *tuba*, or trumpet, broken by the fall. An exact repetition of this trumpet you can find in the Museo Borbonico at Naples, in bronze, among a collection of objects taken from Pompeii. It is there marked "Gladiator's Trumpet," and it would seem to have been sculptured here precisely to state the dying man to be a gladiator. Yet he is often called only a dying Gaul, on account of the torque or circlet on his neck which marks that nation. We must be glad to know that the thrill with which we read Byron's noblest lines have a right to so move us, and that this is not a soldier fallen in battle, but the pathetic victim of a "Roman holiday."

Roman and Renaissance Room.

In this room, the last on this floor, we see specimens of Greek work and beside them the re-birth of art in Florence and other Italian cities at a much later day. We have on the one side, over the door, from the old Greek chisel, a frieze of such grace and of so modern an expression that Raphael, one might think, had designed it; while not far off are the "Day" and "Night" of Michel Angelo, and his head of "David," so infused with that grandeur we left in the "Theseus," that these, in their turn, carry us somewhat back to the earlier period.

And if in Michel Angelo's work we find grandeur, in that of Benvenuto Cellini, also a native of Florence, we find an exquisiteness and a delicacy which have never been carried farther than in the works of this man. In the fascinating memoirs written by himself, which I recommend you to read, we are startled to find a ferocity and blood-thirstiness which we could hardly expect would accompany so refined a genius. But the Bohemianism of his time so expressed itself; and he interlaid narratives of royal orders, executed with ardor and under every difficulty, with these outbursts of adventure, which he enjoyed as the artist of to-day enjoys his escapade into Bohemia. But in whatever he does we find intensity as his characteristic. As an artist

of elaborate work in metals, jewelry, and even statues, the flower of a period of florid prosperity, yet in much still barbaric, Benvenuto Cellini can never lose his high place.

But Giovanni di Bologna, so called, although Flemish by birth, carried a little later the exquisiteness which Cellini sought, to its highest in this "Mercury" of his. The place it has won in a thousand drawing-rooms, where we never tire of this Ariel, light as the blown thistle-down launched upon the blast, keeps the Florentine genius alive before our eyes for ever.

Here is another Florentine, — Luca della Robbia, just a century earlier than Cellini, whose simplicity and love of human nature remove his charmingly natural faces from that fierce time, and make him our contemporary. His "Singing Boys" we seem to have heard ourselves. They can be found as choristers still in many a cathedral.

Before we go upstairs, I would say that these beautiful things we have thus far noticed are all in marble or bronze. Such objects as you will find above are perishable: the ancients can show us nothing of them. Whether tissues or wood-work or pictures, they could not resist the dissolving power of time; but marble is generally preserved to us.

Theophrastus and Pliny consider the marble of Paros as the best worked by the Greeks. Its crystals are large, close together like scales; it is

slightly transparent, and its surface resembles flesh as does no other. Some other Greek islands furnished a first-class material, but the majority of Grecian statues were made from the Pentelic. In modern times, no Greek marble is worked. The world now uses the quarries of Carrara. Michel Angelo discovered them; but it was not till lately that the best quality has been procured, the Serravezza, creamy, flesh-like in tint, and without that sugary pallor which gives a spectral look to the earlier figures done from Carrara marble, and beautifully free from stains. The French have fine marbles, and protect them against competition from those of Italy by a heavy duty on the latter. We in America have beautiful marbles everywhere. I shall never forget the penetrating smile of the astute Cardinal Antonelli, lately deceased, as he said, "I have a full collection of your American marbles, and very beautiful they are." How few of us know much about them! When purchasing once a little block of the fascinating lapis-lazuli at Florence, I remember how startled I was when the mosaic-worker told me it came from California. We have a beautiful serpentine which you may see in the pedestal of our statue of "Franklin," in front of the City Hall. There is a quarry in Connecticut of a serpentine perhaps even more beautiful. Fifty years ago, it was worked into slabs for sideboards; and it looks like the genuine *verd-antique*. It may be still seen in

more than one house in Beacon Street. From Vermont to the Carolinas, there are beautiful varieties of marble. Mr. Richard Greenough found in Vermont a mellow, creamy one, which he has used in his beautiful statue dedicated to the heroes of the war, once pupils of our Latin School. When America has gone farther in wealth and luxury, many of our beautiful marbles will be worked, and even probably exported; and then, perhaps, may be realized a favorite notion of mine, — some one may think it worth his while to establish works again in Paros, and give again to the sculptors the lovely material they have lost.

The best sculptures of Egypt are cut in limestone, and marble is only an ennobled limestone. It is carbonate of lime; and the difference between it and limestone would seem to be only one great additional blast from the glowing work-shop in the earth's interior, blanching and crystallizing the plain rock to a perfection art could not afford to lose.

Upper Hall.

First mentioned in the Catalogue is a cast of the "Second Bronze Gate" of the Baptistery in Florence, by Lorenzo Ghiberti. These are the gates which Michel Angelo so admired, and which he said were worthy to be the gates of Paradise. They are elaborate, crowded with figures, and almost pictorial. The light and shade, at a happy

moment of the day, almost make pictures of them. This is because they are in *alto-relievo*. With Michel Angelo's authorization and their own beauty, you can safely admire them ; but, to do them justice, you must find more time than we can afford at present.

Here are marble busts of Raphael and Rubens. They are true portraits of the men, and vividly express their characters. See how poetry and dreams crowd the arching brows of Raphael ; and how, above the almost feminine nose and mouth, the tender eyes, so wide apart, seem to measure with exactness all the forms of things. And in the head of Rubens observe the florid manhood, the dauntless energy, the amazing life which fill this gentlemanly face. They serve to express the genius of their several countries. Raphael, it is certain, would have admired the powerful brush of the Flemish painter ; and it is also certain that Rubens admired that grace and purity of line to which he could not attain, for his heart must have been given to Titian.

And now you come to America's greatest painter, — one who fed on the past, and recovered for us something of the nobleness of motive and beauty of color of the old masters, — Washington Allston. "Belshazzar's Feast," by him, looks here, in this well-lit space, as it never did on the cramping walls of the Athenæum. Its excellence is to most of us a new revelation. Friends of Allston tell us

that once this picture was as good as finished; but Allston's fastidiousness, and a desire to give it more grandeur, caused him to obliterate much of his work and begin a change which he had not the heart to finish. He could not know, as we do, the Babylonian sculpture and architecture, and this ignorance hampered him; but see that lovely group of bowed heads, and the fiery scorn looking from the queen's face. He must have thought, as he painted Daniel, of the Saint Paul in Raphael's cartoon; but, grand as this is, it falls below the grandeur of that. Allston's picture of "St. Peter delivered from Prison" was painted for Sir George Beaumont. He was a celebrated English amateur, and painted well himself. One of his pictures belongs to the English National Gallery, — "Jacques musing by the Brook," from Shakespeare. He was the greatest patron of art of his time, and he had attached to his house a gallery which included the youthful efforts of all the most famous English painters of the period. There is a charm in these early works, so modest and tentative, which perhaps delights one more than the artists' later ones in the full blaze of recognition.

This picture of Allston's was not there, but in a private chapel on the grounds, the only one in it. It was not far from a seat, a favorite one of the poet Wordsworth's. A tablet near by dedicates it to him, a lovely cedar overshadows it. The view from it over a rich champaign country no one

forgets who has ever seen it; nor does he forget that this place, illustrious through art, was once the home of that Beaumont whose plays, though never acted now, are yet the delight of the dramatic student.

There is an outline "Dance of Fairies" by Allston, which the imagination fills with the pallid moonshine; and we are content to have it thus vaguely left.

It is the fashion to throw stones at our clever pioneer American artist, Benjamin West. Here is his noblest work, probably the best of the many illustrations of Shakespeare commanded of the ablest artists of his time by Alderman Boydell. Beckford, the author of "Vathek," owned the original sketch of this; and he gave it a place of honor among his Italian masters, saying that it was worthy of it. West was academic, and without much insight, and poor in color; but no man in England in his day could compose a picture as well as he. I have seen an engraving of a picture by him of the Quaker family he came from, which has so much of the dignity and decorous grace of that sect as to show what good things he might have done, had he been less ambitious of historical composition. And let us never forget that he was the first to clothe modern soldiers in their own dress, to the admiration of Reynolds. His Indian stoically gazing into the face of the dying Wolfe was so happy an inspiration the world has not forgotten it.

Numbers 211 and 212 show what a clever man can do in a time of decadence. Usually his cleverness but makes more *outré* the error of his time, but it also serves to signalize an epoch by expressing it thoroughly. Boucher's pictures are the triumph of unveracity, while the veracious color and grace of Watteau give him that superiority over mere cleverness which genius always has.

See these little water-colors so faded and worked like miniatures. This "Dowse Collection" is owing to an attempt long ago to make a gallery and show the skill of England in copying masterpieces, mostly from the private collections of England. They are beautifully executed, and each one has the character of the master it copies. The English have always excelled in water-color, and do now; but it is doubtful if there be talent enough at this day to make copies *in little* equal to these. They should be carefully studied; for only here may you see many famous pictures, such as the astonishing Titian's "Diana Bathing," from the Stafford Gallery, the famous "Mill" of Rembrandt, and that modest Madonna with the downcast eyes, whose laughing child presses against her bosom. This latter was copied from an undoubtedly genuine Raphael, once belonging to the gallery of Egalité, Duke of Orleans; and it is hoped that at some future time our Museum may possess it.

Before you leave them, see this "Gerard Dow with his Violin." Its luminous delicacy vividly re-

calls the exquisite original. And now enter our spacious

Picture Gallery.

It is so well lighted that often he who has lent the Museum some modern masterpiece finds in it here a beauty it scarcely revealed at home.

What shall we say of so generous a collection? We cannot find time for many of its pictures, but must group them by schools; and we will begin with our own. If America have already her old masters, they cannot be very old; but there are a few names which hold their own with those of the oldest date. There are here few, if any, specimens of those who first showed America a picture, the fathers of our art. Even of Smibert there is, I think, but one. But Copley is our ancestral painter. Dr. Holmes has said that to own a portrait by Copley or Gilbert Stuart is a kind of title of nobility.

Copley's pictures, though somewhat hard, and his flesh wanting true color, are ancestral in the sense that they have a great air of truth and are strong in the characteristics of his time. His draperies are unlike what we wear now, and in the sheen of satin and the dull brightness of velvet he excels. He painted with great intelligence and power. So strong are these portraits that they help to make us understand better our ancestors. They are valued more and more, and Boston is fortunate in having

so many of them. After he left America, the influence of England somewhat tamed the energetic dryness and force of his style. He there learned color ; and his picture of "Cromwell dissolving Parliament," now in our Public Library, is almost Venetian in the rich glow of its tints. His most excellent work is one he painted in England, soon after his removal there ; a group of family portraits, now owned by Mr. Charles Amory. Its realism and weighty characterization are marvellously fine.

There was an American by the name of Watson, who rose to the dignity of being chosen Lord Mayor of London. When a young man at Jamaica, in the West Indies, while swimming, his leg was bitten off by a shark. The story goes that two curious Yankees, visiting him, eyed with interest the lost limb, or rather its substitute. They evidently wished to question him about it. He politely offered to answer one question, but one only. Then they inquired, "How did you lose your leg?" "It was bitten off." Notwithstanding the half-satisfaction of their expression, he left them there. This adventure Copley painted, and the picture is now in Boston.

Gilbert Stuart — whom I very well remember seeing paint when his hand was so shaken by age that only after a few uncertain movements of his pencil he would make suddenly a firm touch — had a manner of his own, and his pictures are daily valued more and more. He prepared his palette

•

with a few mixed tints; and, while his method and touch were of the freest, his style was so scientific, so intelligent, he scarcely ever missed the effect he desired. He painted much on panels prepared for him by a carpenter under his directions. The good preservation and freshness of his pictures exceed those of any other painter; and, while his method was wholly scientific, his knowledge of human nature was so great that he diffused the very life and character of his sitter upon his canvas. It is not only a fortunate thing for us that we should have had such a man to secure for us a consummate portraiture of the "Father of his Country," but that so many of our immediate predecessors were treated by him. He painted a whole generation, and with astonishing evenness of merit. He was a great humorist, not a little brusque and downright with his sitters; for he hated pretension and affectation.

Another painter of his time, Trumbull, the pupil of West, and the friend of Washington, has given us Revolutionary battle-pieces, now in the Capitol at Washington, which we cannot too highly prize. For he was a soldier as well as painter, and understood the scenes he depicted. Though somewhat cold and formal, his pictures have a genuineness for which there is no substitute.

Though English by descent, we have not the good fortune to possess many first-class English pictures. We have no Gainsborough; and of the

two by Sir Joshua Reynolds here, only one is absolutely certain to be his. The portrait of a little girl — Louisa Pyne — is undoubted; and the warm color of the dress, the tender, floating pearliness of the shadows, and the transparent carnations of the flesh, make it worthy of the Museum, to which it has been given.

A famous picture by Turner has lately been shown in the Museum. Our public have never before seen any of his best pictures. This one, so eloquently praised by Ruskin, has been an object of great interest to all; and it has met with every variety of criticism. It is a poetical picture, and no simple rendering of nature, but a passionate expression of the devilish horrors of the Slave Trade. To understand the spirit in which it was painted, one should remember how deep and universal was the feeling of execration in England against the cruelties of the middle passage. To be enjoyed, it must be looked at sympathetically, and in that spirit Ruskin wrote of it. Those floating limbs, those long and wallowing waves, the sinister and dark hull of that floating hell, the flaming swords of vengeance flashed through an accusing heaven, should be felt, to understand the mood in which it was painted. Had England chosen, she could have sent us pictures by Turner of the soberest and most genuine realism; marines which exceed in power and poetry any thing that man has yet produced, or sunny gleams falling on Italian

cities, or great seaports of old, like that noble one of Carthage, which Turner in his will desired to have hung beside the glorious Claude of the National Gallery. England forgot not to fulfil his wish, and there it hangs in immortal fellowship and beauty beside its glorious rival.

When Turner was old, like so many aged artists, he gave us the essence of his many memories. He played with his subject, and, careless of accuracy in detail, expressed as it were the spiritual impression of the scene he rendered.

Asking once Charles Robert Leslie what he thought of Turner's later works, he said: "I love them, as we all do. I consider them beautiful symphonies in color."

It would be well for us, when looking at the "Slave Ship," not to try to find in it the veracity of a common marine picture, but to see there a passionate fellowship of nature with the indignation in man's soul, a symphony of color which has the grandeur of an ode of Pindar.

The want in America of old English masters, and indeed of the new ones, has deprived us of that association with the art of the mother country which might have attached us to the English school; while through the great merit of the modern French school, and a sympathy with its excellent method of work, we are now rather French than English in our proclivities. And yet this new French school of landscape was born of English parentage. You

will see a little picture of Rochester Castle, number 16, by Constable, an English painter, which is but a slight sketch, yet is interesting because his influence was so great. He not only painted from nature, but was so earnest in his purpose that Mr. Leslie has shown me a large portfolio of his filled only with studies of sky effects. A picture of a market-cart crossing a mill-stream, while the harvest-fields beyond lie bathed in golden light, and above them, in contrast, rises a showery sky, by chance came to France about the year 1833. This picture was with the French as the discovery of a nature which they had forgotten. Its sparkling freshness, its look of out-of-doors, the vigor of its greens, and the powerful truth of its values, at once revolutionized French landscape art. A school is a constellation. One good artist makes many; for he points out the true method, that of nature, and leads the way. Jules Dupré, who was in 1833 painting pictures in sympathy with Constable's style, lives yet to find that the world is not tired of his effective rendering of light and shade on tree and meadow.

Two French artists, Troyon and Rousseau, were especially influenced by Constable. The former added to the freshest and broadest handling of landscape a treatment of cattle, whether single or in groups, which unites them to the beautiful meadows through which they move more naturally than has any cattle-painter of any school. He has a

charm of suggestion without fatiguing detail, the most learned certainty in the rendering of values, — which means finding its true place for each object in the picture, — and a certain poetic charm of reality, as if the scene were present before you, which have made his importance only the greater since his recent death. Originally connected with the manufactory of Sèvres, of which town he was a native, and struggling and poor through long years, Troyon died with a host of friends and emulators from every country; having lived to enjoy that wealth for which he had so long waited.

Rousseau did not paint cattle nor even figures much. While Troyon found his models in Normandy, the grand forest of Fontainebleau sufficed for Rousseau. His pictures are placed at the head of the French school of landscape, and they deserve it. One feels in them the loving, enthusiastic pupil of Nature, and an attempt to render her whole charm. While in his smaller pictures there is a finished subtlety as of miniature, his larger ones strike with a grand and powerful accent, and the richest contrast of light and shade.

He was a man most genial and pleasant, delighted to talk with a modest complacency but without affectation of his triumph, and of the paths where Nature led him and the pleasures of the keen pursuit. For he loved Nature ardently, humbly submitted to her guidance, and never dictated to her the lessons she should teach. It is the want

of this affectionate, reverential spirit, the attitude of looking up, which makes so many landscapes but a solemn mockery, almost an insolent trifling with the secret the artist does not try to wrest from Nature.

Corot had the same modest affection for the scenery he painted. It is said he called the sun "ce Charlatan," it can so disguise with splendor any object. Corot loved the pearl of morning better even than evening's gold. He saw that local color is lost in the grey of distance. He excelled in putting his object in the right place. His skies have little blue in them, but a cool brightness descends on hills whose tenderness is yet firm, sleeping pools never too vivid with brightness, willows whose boughs are but hinted at, and foliage whose color is rendered with the least possible of green; while some figure sits or strolls beneath, of a color so understated that it does not disturb the tranquillity of the whole. One might almost say that he was a poet rather than a painter; and even then his song is a monotone, but a monotone he has so made his own, and so wholly a new note, that we never tire of it.

There have been lately exhibited in the Museum several charcoal sketches of a French artist, who like Corot has a province of his own, where he reigns supreme. Millet, born of country-folk, and in his youth within sight and hearing of the grandly suggestive sea, has felt it his mission to express

the light and shadow of the life of the *prolétaire*, or French peasant. This he has done with such fidelity to their humble pleasures and long unrelieved toil, and at the same time given such dignity and even grandeur to his homely figures, that at last after years of neglect he has succeeded in touching the world's heart. His ideas of art and truth were at the opposite pole from the fashionable frivolity of the empire. He was a man of somewhat sombre character and simple faith, and many of his pictures have been called *biblique*. They have a Biblical severity, and remind us of the gravest of the Italian masters. Once showing me a picture of gleaners, — three women snatching with the greed of poverty at the scanty ears left by the reapers in the foreground, in the distance a lusty farmer on his pampered cob giving orders to his men as they fill the groaning wain, — with his peculiar smile, he said, "I mean it to be rejected for the Salon of next year." He meant that the appeal of the gleaners, contrasting with the farmer's insolent prosperity, would be held dangerous by the judges, as stimulating to Communism.

In moral expression, as well as intimate truthfulness in the action and look of his figures, he certainly leads the present generation of French artists.

You notice that I have dwelt more than you might have expected upon landscape art, and the great illustrators of this. The reason is that it is

the taste of our time. The apprehension of the meaning of a landscape, as art now considers it, is a comparatively new idea. Till pretty lately the world had not overtaken it. The dumb but not inanimate, the stationary but not unsensitive life of the fields and woods appeal to us with a voice to which Cowper, Wordsworth, and Byron taught us to listen. By familiarity with this dumb nature, we hear harmonies our fathers never did, our sensibility discovers for us that this life flows from the same reservoir as our own, and is its modification in growing things. Also this sympathy not only brings us nearer to our humble brethren of the field, but educates in us that artistic sense of the meaning of a landscape, — its harmony, its gradations of distance; the expression of its face, changing as the hours pass over it; and earth's sweet marriage with heaven, in the fluctuating, mutual aspect of either; the hour saddened with clouds, the buoyancy and joy of a June morning, or day's pathetic farewell, which smiles us a good-by from lips of fading crimson. We then see nature as a series of pictures, and love to call the author of all things the "Supreme Artist."

This modern taste, so healthy, so allied to the best passages of the poets, was unknown to the ancients. Homer gives usually but a single epithet for each aspect of nature, and the Roman poets are strongest when they describe nature's terrors or its extravagance. They write with an air of

discovery of the world, but not with that sweet familiarity which makes the beauty of nature a part of our daily life. Hills shaggy with forests, rude paths where any living thing might prove a beast of prey or an enemy, that armed distrust of the mind which had no sense of security and tranquil enjoyment in what it saw, made man an alien in his surroundings. An artist can only reflect the spirit of his fellows and his time. Pompeii indeed shows us hints of landscape, but only hints, and of a nature close to towns or seaports. Raphael, and the early German and Venetian schools, give us rounded hills, gleaming water, with castles or villages not far off; but their treatment of foliage where the one brown tree of the foreground is relied upon to give the distance value, the timidity of their grass and leaves, the childishness of their skies, show that they were not free men of Nature's verdant city. They but peer at her from the loopholes of castle or convent walls.

The first great landscape painter was Titian, and no wonder. For there was added to his all-including power that memory of the Dolomite region, and the young Alps about Cadore, which he could but love to reproduce. Poussin, and Claude after him, are the two great landscapists of the early time. Both were Frenchmen: they seem to have been heralds of their nation's eminence in our own day. The charm of Poussin consists in his masses of bowery foliage, the gleam of waters between dusky

stems, and the broken hillside fading in air and crowned with the castle or town of the Italy he studied in.

Claude is almost the genius of aerial perspective. Though his landscapes have the ordered regularity of classic composition, where grove nods to grove and temple is fronting temple, yet is all so clothed in Nature's truest air and sunshine that you may safely disregard the slight of Ruskin, and love him to your heart's content. In the movement of water, the dark blue surface of the Mediterranean, with the rays of the setting sun dancing over it, he is wholly without a rival. By this excellence and his transparent distances, he keeps well in the front with all that has been best done since.

And speaking of Claude, I am reminded in what infancy are yet the museums of America. We have no specimens, worthy of the name, of the old masters; not only no Claude, no satisfactory Poussin, but no Raphael, no Titian, no Fra Beato Angelico, no Sebastian, no Correggio, nor even any thing from the fading academic school of Bologna. Yes, by chance, here is one, number 129, an Annibale Carracci, when he surpassed himself, under the sweet influence of Correggio. At the time that picture was bought, good specimens of the old masters could be obtained. Old untouched galleries would then surrender their treasures, and the auction sales of London and Paris did at times offer you masterpieces. California, and our modern

wealth, had not then, as now, snatched from every Italian wall heirlooms which their owner's poverty, but not his will, consented to relinquish. Oh that America could have anticipated her future need! With a million or two, she could then have stored her infant galleries with such treasures as are now lost to her for ever, or only to be got in a contest of nations at such a cost as to sadly limit their number.

Irreverence is sometimes said to be the vice of America. With little to feed reverence here, no august spoils of the past, and living in a sequestration from old historic sites and the ruins which feed the reverential feeling, it is a pity that to these we must add that absence here of man's early achievement in painting, which is one of the noblest feeders of this immortal sentiment. Even the specimens of old masters that are offered us are so doubtful, so discouraging and unauthenticated, that Americans have been taught to think the great schools of the past a mystery beyond their reach. It was only through the stimulus of one public-spirited Bostonian's generosity that New York could be induced to secure the two little galleries of Dutch masters offered her by Mr. Blodgett.

But we have something to strive for. The difficulty of attainment will be a spur in the sides of our intent; and with our increasing wealth we may rely upon it that we shall yet see many a costly ancient masterpiece triumphantly borne hither.

For, in pictures, only originals are valuable. A copy, even the best, has comparatively no value; while in sculpture, which owes nothing to touch or color, the absolute effect of the original is given us through the fidelity of plaster. And these casts of priceless originals are so cheap that we shall be able to get copies of every famous one we want. Were the space larger in our Museum, as it will be, already we should have representatives from all the great sculpture galleries of Europe.

A few words more only of some of the modern masters in landscape. Numbers 61 and 64 give us specimens of two men, Fromentin and Décamps, who have opened to the gaze of Europe the magic of the East. But Fromentin's East is only that which Africa owns along the southern border of the Mediterranean. His movement of Arab horsemen, his coldly luminous skies and sober tints in grass and tree, differentiate him from Décamps, whose first great picture, lately owned by Mr. Blodgett, "Setting the Night Watch in Smyrna," was the sensation of the year 1834 or '35, in Paris. He had a passionate crowd of admirers, at whose head marched with lively trumpet strains Théophile Gautier. That crowd has since so swelled, that heralding ardor has been so sustained, that the price of a Décamps is now something formidable. He was a poet who translated not only the sunshine of the East, but the thoughts and character of its figures. His method was akin to the golden

gloom of Rembrandt. Fromentin is subtler, airier : he alone can give us the wild grace of the Arab horse. To know how penetrating is his intelligence, you should take with his pictures, as a supplement, his books on Africa. His "Sahel" and "Le Sahara pendant l'Été" are word pictures inferior to nothing his pencil gives us.

And here is one of the few great landscape painters of Germany, Achenbach. He has nothing of Germany's opaque manner of rendering nature, for all its unsuggestive tediousness is washed from him in the grey waters of the Baltic. No one renders a weighty wave crashing upon some tottering light-house, or dying in fringes of foam between the black piers of a causeway, better than he. Every gallery is proud to show his work, for he has made a little province of marine nature his own.

It does the Germans good to get away from their great regimented, prosaic centre, and expatriate themselves. Heine grew like some northern plant in a southern flower-pot at Paris ; and Knaus, that fascinating and homely humorist, must have left all his heavy baggage behind him.

I must call your attention before we leave this room to a supremely excellent portrait by one of Holland's best painters, Bartholemew van der Helst, the rival of Rembrandt, as you will see at Amsterdam, where a large figure-piece of his hangs in honest rivalry opposite Rembrandt's masterpiece,

the "Setting of the Night Watch." This picture speaks for itself. Can any thing exceed the look of reality in that face and those weighty hands?

Notice, too, 126, the "Count of Warburg mourning over his Son's Body," by Ary Schæffer. This, I believe, was suggested by a ballad of Schiller, and is noticeable as a good specimen of a man dear to many of us, who led the world of sentiment in art, especially religious sentiment, for a long time, in Paris. At one time, Schæffer aimed at color, as may be seen in a picture of "Macbeth and the Witches" owned by Mr. C. C. Perkins; but afterwards he chastised his taste, and gave us simple pictures of the purest and loftiest sentiment, with a color almost neutral and fresco-like, accompanied with a certain timidity of drawing. He was a Protestant, and a Hollander. His statue has lately been erected by his admiring countrymen and placed in his native town. He had a great deal of religious feeling, which perhaps he most successfully expressed in his lovely picture of Saint Augustine and his mother Monica. The rapture of faith has not been better expressed since the day of the cloistered Saint of Florence, Fra Beato Angelico.

Ary Schæffer had two spacious, contiguous studios, whence a gate led past a noble cedar to his sunny house. His estate was so large that a friend once said to him, "Do you know, if you sell your land, you are rich." He was struck by the remark,

but quietly replied: "An artist should not disturb his mind with speculation. I shall keep the calm of mine by living as I do now." It was a saying worthy to match that of the great Agassiz, who said, "I cannot afford to waste time in making money." Would that all artists could afford to hold to this high philosophy!

Of the other pictures in this little gallery, most of which are temporarily lent the Museum, I think it unbecoming to say much, as they are chiefly by living American artists. But what we owe to the passionate delicacy of Mr. Lafarge, the breezy richness of Inness, the tender poetry of Boughton, the New England characterization of Eastman Johnson, the magnetic leadership of Hunt, the weird picturesqueness of Vedder, and the saline flavor of Gay, we can at least feel with silent gratitude.

Mr. Church, from whom we have here a little specimen, held his own so famously at the late great sale of Mr. Johnston's pictures in New York as to make it a triumph for us all. No one had sculptured water, not even Ruysdael, till Church showed us how to do it in his Niagara. He has an eagle's eye for distance, nor does a continent nor the widest horizon appall him. His manner is his own. We may regret a too careful attention to details, a too finical handling, but these rarely make him lose the needful breadth; and all this fine work is so easy to him, so full of

instruction to us, that we bear without mortification the slight of France, due possibly to his owing little to her teaching.

And Kensett, — he is lost to us; and we might join that band of eulogists who expressed so soon after the death of their friend their appreciation of his value in a noble competition, not slackening for a moment till the total of the sale of his sketches, taken from his walls as he left them, reached the astonishing figure of \$135,000.

When Thackeray saw No. 106, trees and a brook, he said to Kensett, "That is the one picture I have seen here I should like to purchase, if I could afford it." The artist replied, "Perhaps your companion will be glad to hear that I have painted it for him."

Here I see a bit of an old master, and at the artist's best, — a lion's head by Rubens. This is the original sketch for the head of the nearest of the two lions drawing the car of Marie di Medicis in that famous series which shows us that the whole mythology of Greece, mingled with all France's chivalry, could not daunt the hand of the robust Fleming. Rubens excelled in animals, and loved the lion. He was in full sympathy with the strength and courage of this king of the desert. He expresses it in this head. There is no falling off from the terror of that scowl and the rapine of that open mouth, through weakness. For he was a lion among men.

Let us now bid a reluctant farewell to the pictures, for we shall see no more of them, and enter the

Loan Room.

Practical democracy is the extension of comfort, once belonging only to the higher classes, to those below. So fully has this been accomplished here that a line drawn in Europe is effaced; for no one here thinks of speaking of the lower classes. It is this familiarity with practicable comfort, and mutual intercourse between rich and poor, which has not the taint of servility or pride on either side, and the storehouse of strength for future use furnished by the common schools, which make our democracy so real to us and so unintelligible to Europe.

Comforts then, conveniences, are widely diffused; but no democracy can execute such tapestries as these, loaned by Mr. George O. Hovey. They will stand for that feudal, princely magnificence which we associate with the historical plays of Shakespeare and the earlier Italian poetry. They hung in magnificent vagueness of form and color before walls whose dampness they could not wholly disguise. The locks, the window-fittings, the joints of all woodwork in the room which they garnished, would probably excite a derisive smile on the face of a Boston mechanic. The floor they overhung may have had only rushes for its carpeting, and how filthy such rushes became after long use we

have full accounts of in books of old. Here was splendor without comfort; and cannot we, who so much prefer the latter, concede to these regal halls their tapestry without envy or denial of their antique charm?

Let me try now to interest you in this Majolica and Robbia ware. You will find the history of them compactly set forth in the Catalogue. Whole books, indeed, have been written upon them, ornamented with gorgeous plates, in which the resources of chromo-lithography are severely tried. These books give the history of every ware from the earliest to the latest time. They give the characteristic forms and treatment of the different schools, the monograms or trade-marks of the various artists; for indeed the study of these things has grown to be an art in itself.

Forty years ago, here and there in some quaint château, some mouldy castle, might be seen a comparatively unprized collection of such ware. They were pronounced roccoco, and their possessor considered eccentric. Now they are the passion, as well as the fashion, of the hour. These, like most of the objects you will see here, till our visit is ended, conspire to give the name *bric-à-brac* to a collection which might also take to itself the name of ART IN LESSER THINGS. Not a little was this ardor for the earlier porcelains and ceramic ware owing to two influences, one that artists stamped with the seal of approval the *naïve* though often grotesque

embellishment upon them. Tired of Sèvres and its emasculated effeminacy, they found intention and style in the robust rudeness of these designs. And the sentiment of historical importance, attaching to every era a new meaning, and giving unity to the whole progress of man's art development, brought forward this ware of the past and gave it its fitting place and value. For this sense of the historical meaning of the art of the past is new to the world. It could not reach it till the eye fairly commanded the whole stream which flowed from the hidden springs of antiquity, connecting nation with nation, school with school, and by juxtaposition, contrast, and alliance, finding for each an importance which it could not win alone. So, in looking at this ware, notice the brilliant glaze of its surface. The secret of that glaze is the mountain-spring whence came the many schools which like rainbow bubbles float upon its ever-widening current. Must we go back farther than Spain, with its Moorish visitors, farther than the East they came from, farther than the Persia which seems the water-shed dividing the arts of Asia from those of Europe, to find that hidden spring in the glazes whose beginning China herself does not know, and which she, the oldest of nations, may well have surrendered to her younger sisters? Some think that even the mariner's compass was the sacred mystery of each Phœnician ship, which without it would have hardly dared to affront the tempests of the Bay of Biscay in regular

commercial voyages to England for tin, and was furnished by China to the caravan of the overland trader from the Mediterranean: if so, we may well believe that in the beauty of these glazes China led the way. She claims for all her arts a fabulous antiquity. Indeed, the power of invention seems to have perished there before it was known to Europe. They claim the mariner's compass, the art of printing, even gunpowder, I believe; and no one has denied the prodigious antiquity of their ceramic art. However it may be, we find the chief mosque of Jerusalem one sheet, externally, of glazed and painted tiles, which come from beyond Damascus, and are of the kind which make one of the marked and beautiful features of the East. These tiles certainly went with the Moors in their journeys of conquest, they came to Spain, they came to Sicily, and it may well be that this art of theirs leaped from Majorca into the many schools of Italian ceramic ware which were ready to receive it. It flourished there with such energy, the genius of the artists of the time was so well suited to it, that it is no wonder their beautiful works are now recovering the high place which for a time they had lost.

If the history of this primordial glaze is a secret to which we cannot attain, there is romance and adventure in the well-known histories of the many schools of European porcelain. The Egyptians draw an enduring glaze over a mere clot of earth,

and the tiles of Damascus owe their beauty to colored designs and a brilliant surface superposed upon common limestone. But porcelain owes every thing to its material. Till clay of a certain fineness, flint of a certain purity, be discovered, the ware cannot have that fragile delicacy which makes it true porcelain. You would be interested to read what may be called the romantic narrative of the search and discovery of satisfactory earths in Germany, France, and England. The story of national exultation, of royal patronage, of the authentic signature of each establishment, the enthusiasm of the artist who furnished the colored designs by which each school, each epoch, can be distinguished, is read by an ever-widening circle of amateurs.

America bides her time. In her continental breadth, she must hide somewhere a *pâte* which may rival those of Europe and be the glory of our future. I well remember in Etruria, England, hearing in his family about the successful search by the great Wedgwood for the silex and earth he needed. Descendants of that family, and its rivals in this manufacture, are considering whether it may not be desirable to plant establishments within the line of our tariff, and while manufacturing for us be still working at home. Should they do so, it will not be long before they may find in our soil what they desire; and a new school be founded, for which the growing dexterity of our women in design and pattern may find a field, and thus finally bring to us both profit and renown.

And with this mere sketch of the history of *faïence* and porcelain, I pass by a natural transition to a new nation and another glaze.

Japan obtains from a tree of her own a varnish which gives to wood and paper a gloss unknown elsewhere. Their exquisite lacquer, the discovery of the uses of the juice of that Japanese tree, must have had much to do with the beauty and success of their art. To draw on this delightful surface forms which could be clearly expressed, details which could be carried as far as they desired, developed a genius the world admires. Completeness of statement, careful outline, a notice of the action and flight of birds, the lift and drooping of flowers, they contrive to make suggestive of a nature which we feel to be true without having seen it. The balanced order of parts, the grace of stems and leaves, a something bizarre yet artistic in the arrangement of all, readily make us take the outline of a mountain or the flat tint of water as sufficient; for what is finished is done so well. The Japanese are a little race with small hands and feet, a delicate nervous system, which gives them a sensibility to grace and beauty, and an expression of these which we clumsier people of the West cannot overtake. In their own way, they are our masters; and we gladly sit at their feet and learn. In many a room in New England, sympathetic female fingers are working on screens and fans, faithful pupils of these far-away teachers.

And if they give to us the flower of their delicate intuitions and their subtle skill, we in turn repay them with our masculine teachings in the useful arts. May we both gain by the exchange. Many have feared that intercourse with us may brutalize and degrade the ancient cunning of their hand; but if their art be a true thing, and have its root strong in the Japanese nature, it may modify, without destroying itself, through the new influences. The subtlety of their craft is shown not only in this lacquer work, it is everywhere. Their exquisitely tinted bronze is a marvel of finish and audacity. Ivory is pliant, plastic, in their fingers; and they not only carve it as if done by some artist of the court of Titania, but they emboss it with strange devices, and a beautiful insect world, the gloss of whose bodies, the transparency of whose wings, defy the lens almost as do their originals.

And hack-work seems almost unknown to them. Each new object is a creation in itself. The combinations are so original, the designs so fresh and startling, that we are always furnished with the added pleasure of surprise.

In this Loan Room are superb specimens of the genius of Japan, most rare and varied from each other. I cannot particularize, where one might willingly grant pages to each of these beautiful things, if time allowed.

In caricature, the Japanese have a way of their own. Mock processions, in which the grandeur of

royalty is taken off by insects, remind us of La Fontaine; for the irony is delicate like his, and the use of the animal creation is in his spirit. These outlines of turtles that you see here, their numbers diminishing in perspective, storks also flying and wading, belong to a very pleasing department of their art. But to see what they can do in this manner, how varied and surprising are their designs, you should examine their picture-books. These can be got here, and are not dear. They give you a complete idea, not only of their natural objects, but of the costumes, interiors of houses, and villages; in short, they are a compendium of the life of Japan. There are also here a number of Satsuma jars. These come from the establishment of the noble whose name they bear. They are very often in what is called *crackle*; that is to say, the surface is broken up into hundreds of little pieces, which is caused by the difference in the expansion by heat between the external glaze and the body of the vase; this produces these cracks.

Here and there among the bronzes you may observe tortoises delicately executed, with something which, beginning in the centre of the shell, or near it, flows behind in a kind of weed-like tail. These creatures, thus furnished, are considered sacred in both China and Japan. A few years ago, one of our physicians procured two or three specimens of these, I mean the original living tortoises, with these flowing tails. Often have I watched

them swim, and seen these tails waving behind like rudders. It is a growth much like moss in its appearance when dry, and peculiar to this species ; as they were prodigious eaters of worms, often filled with earth, it would seem as if this parasitic growth might be owing to the constant supply of soil below the shell. They perhaps absorbed their "peck of dirt" in this manner.

In case K, a superb malachite box presented by Russia to Mr. G. V. Fox, when he visited that country in the "Miantonoma," is a fine specimen of the ordinary form of the royal presents of Russia. No other country seems to possess this mineral. It is a monopoly of the government and a few leading families. The vivid green of its color is owing to the action of copper.

In case L, we have German and Venetian glass. The old embossed goblet of Germany, usually of a deep green or yellow, often bears armorial crests and mottoes in old German. These are skilfully imitated now in Bohemia. The form and color of these goblets are very characteristic of Germany, and one of the happiest art-expressions of that nation. The Venetian glass, so thin, so tender in color, with spiral stems so exquisite, has for centuries been the delight of amateurs. This also has its modern representative ; and, if you should visit Murano, you would have the pleasure of seeing it made. You must not forget to go ; for there are few things more entertaining than glass-

blowing, and there this reaches the point of high art.

In cases D and P, you will notice the embroideries from Herzegovina. These often are faded and old, having served for generations as bedquilts. But the beauty of the patterns and the sombre splendor of the color make them much sought for by the traveller in the East. We feel in looking at them that we are approaching Asia: the secret of their charm must have reached Europe, perhaps by many détours, from Persia.

Case S holds specimens of textile stuffs and embroideries, selected by Signor Alessandro Castellani for the Museum. It is with us a subject of constant regret that the superb collection of armor belonging to Mrs. T. B. Lawrence, of many epochs, from the most famous schools, should have been destroyed in the late great fire of Boston. This lady, who intended presenting the collection to our Museum, and to which she had made costly additions, — for example, a full suit of inlaid armor, both for man and horse, of one of the Gonzagas, — bore stoically, as had to do the friends of the Museum, this loss. She comforted herself with a noble poem of resignation by one of England's earlier bards, giving emphasis to the line

“There is no armor against fate.”

This very valuable armor was insured. The money paid by the insurance-office was dedicated by this

lady to the purchase of this rich assortment of mediæval and church hangings, altar-coverings, copes, &c. As an exhibition of the beauty and gorgeousness to which church and priestly decoration could attain, they are interesting to us; for though the Catholic Church exists here, and at some future day may find itself in power, dividing our country with the Protestants, however rich it may then be, it can never show us church vestments which can rival these. They are a part of the past; and, though in no sense art, the beauty of the material, the richness of the embroidery, and their splendid color, make them grateful to the eye of the artist as well as to that of the antiquarian.

In the Lawrence room, you think yourself suddenly in some baronial castle of the olden time. This panelling, this carving, these portraits, find themselves well supplemented by the tables, cradle, chairs, and other objects whose age and treatment make them in harmony with the room they occupy. It was the custom formerly in Italy for a bride to possess an ample chest of house-linen. These chests are often richly carved and very spacious. The fatal chest in which Ginevra on her marriage-night was imprisoned, and where her mouldering bones were discovered only after many years, was one of these. As many of us have read the sad story so beautifully told by Mr. Rogers, these marriage-chests have for us a pathetic interest.

Let us now terminate our visit by casting a glance

round the engraving room. Mr. Francis C. Gray was one of the accomplished men Boston can boast of. He was very erudite, and his memory so exact that in conversational discussions of obscure points his decision was often sought and considered final. He almost never failed to give the proper answer to a difficult question others could not decide; and I remember once, as an example, his mortification, at a dinner at Lord Overstone's, when asked the number of emigrants to America the previous year, that he could not give it. "I had forgotten that," he said, "but I could have given the number for three or four years preceding." He was a great lover of the Fine Arts, and in the youthful days of the Athenæum had copied for it some of the old masters he loved best. With the help of a learned German, Mr. Thies, who actively corresponded for him with all the great centres of engraving in Europe, he made a very rare and costly collection, which included many proofs before the letter and etchings of the first *étiquette* by the most famous artists. His "Rembrandts" and "Dürers" are particularly fine. Such engravings could with difficulty be procured now. I fear engraving must soon be added to the arts which are lost; for photography, applied not only as a cheaper substitute for engraving, but to pictures and frescoes, and even the first sketches of the most illustrious artists, makes it unlikely that this laborious and costly method of copying a picture can survive a

reproduction, satisfactory, so far as such a shadow of an original can be, but still leaving to the noble and dignified labor of the burin a place of its own, which it cannot disturb.

These engravings are a loan from Harvard College, where they were bestowed in narrow quarters, unfurnished with any suitable custodian. For many years almost buried there, the College gladly and generously avails itself of this opportunity for bringing before the public this rare and valuable collection.

And this leads me to say that, of all the beautiful things you have seen in these many rooms, but few are owned by the Museum. They are mostly loaned; but we may fondly hope that many will get so attached to their new situation, so flattered by the excellent light and the notice of thousands, that they will gladly remain. It is hoped that the Museum will prove a great reservoir into which many streams of bounty will be constantly pouring. Every good citizen who owns a choice work of art desires to share the pleasure of its enjoyment with others; and he will often prefer, when departing, to secure a home for it where he knows it will be admired and cherished, rather than take the chances of the auction-room or the neglect to which the indifference of an heir might consign it.

Generosity is contagious. Here it will always have its reward; and thus the chief reliance of the friends of the Museum for its future lies in the hope

of the good-will of all, the willing gifts of the wealthy, and that popular support which its friends mean to make it deserve.

And now you may ask me if this Museum, this receptacle of such a multitude of objects in every department of art, is but the tomb of beauty, lifeless, and speaking only through the eloquence of the Grecian masterpiece or the canvas of some great artist. In answer, you will be glad to hear that it is thoroughly alive. At this very beginning of its usefulness, it has a vivid and human life breathed into it. These halls are not silent, but echo with words of instruction and the delightful enthusiasm of young and zealous scholars. It was a happy thought which secured for the infant Museum the learning and accomplishment of the able teacher, Mr. Grundmann. Under his guidance already are to be found here seventy-five scholars, who count the least lost of the day those fruitful hours they spend under his skilful direction. The nude is here studied, and all the treasures of engravings, statuary, and pictures supplement the labors of the school-room, and thus the Museum is made alive.

Its future should give us little anxiety, when we remember how high a spirit of æsthetic culture already animates our public; how the visible advantage to all the Museum is, will daily win for it a more loving crowd of patrons; how its fame will be bound up with the future fame of our beloved city; how it will be worn by us all as a pearl of

great price, and be the proud mother of the many art-children the future must bring her.

And now, Friend Starbuck, we will shake hands and part. Athens in her prime passed a law that her richer citizens should furnish the games at their own expense. They gladly did so; for what they lost of their substance by it, they recovered through that approbation and popularity with their fellow-citizens which they valued more than money.

We, of a greater democracy than Greece knew, have accepted the half-jeering and half-complimentary title of the "Modern Athens," and are content to do for our Athens as our namesakes did before us. And the liberal Boston public has not withheld from taking its share in the burden of expense.

We have made a brilliant beginning, but there is very much to be done before the Museum is complete. So favorable is the present opportunity for building the Museum's unfinished front, labor and materials being low in cost, that it is thought an effort should be made to do so at once. Sixty or seventy thousand dollars only is necessary for that which at a more flourishing period might cost a hundred thousand. May we hope that, if your visit to this little section of our future great home of Art shall have made you really its friend, you not only may be tempted to a liberality which you are sure will be wisely used, but that you will urge

your neighbors and friends to join with us in cordial efforts to complete our plan, and thus add to our many public institutions and our noble series of schools this one, which, if our hopes are justified, may prove the crowning glory of the city we love.

Boston Public Library
Central Library, Copley Square

Division of
Reference and Research Services

Fine Arts Department

The Date Due Card in the pocket indicates the date on or before which this book should be returned to the Library.

Please do not remove cards from this pocket.

(Nov., 1887, 20,000)

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

One volume allowed at a time, and obtained only by card; to be kept 14 days (or seven days in the case of fiction and juvenile books published within one year) without fine; not to be renewed; to be reclaimed by messenger after 21 days, who will collect 20 cents besides fine of 2 cents a day, including Sundays and holidays; not to be lent out of the borrower's household, and not to be transferred; to be returned at this Hall.

Borrowers finding this book mutilated or unwarrantably defaced, are expected to report it; and also any undue delay in the delivery of books.

* * No claim can be established because of the failure of any notice, to or from the Library, through the mail.

The record below must not be made or altered by borrower.



